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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: DRC ELECTION DAY: SITREP 2, 10/29 1230

REF: KINSHASA 1671

¶1. Despite isolated problems, observers continue to report generally smooth, orderly voting throughout the country in the October 29 DRC elections. Without exception, voters seem to be familiar with the process, which has helped reduce the amount of time people are spending waiting to vote.

¶2. Observers' anecdotes describe a purposeful, largely peaceful process in which the voters know their chosen candidates and are familiar with the process. The DCM, who is participating as an accredited observer, reported seeing "old ladies with canes fighting the mud" in order to reach the polling stations, as well as seeing an "orderly and good natured" group of people chanting near one voting center.

¶3. Small problems have been registered in some regions. In Bukavu, South Kivu province, party witnesses of Vice President Bemba's MLC reportedly showed up with voter cards that were not their own. In Kindu, Maniema province, police removed representatives of one provincial assembly candidate who were attempting to influence voters outside a polling station.

¶4. MONUC reports uneven turnout around the country. In Bukavu, 15-20 percent of registered voters had already voted by 9:00 a.m. In Kindu, turnout was low, although as in Kinshasa (reftel) increased numbers of voters were expected after church services. In Mbuji-Mayi, turnout has been possibly 60 percent in the city itself, with high turnout reported throughout Eastern Kasai.

¶5. In Kinshasa, low turnout is largely attributable to the rain, which has continued steadily since 3:00 a.m. At some voting stations, only about 10 percent of registered voters had been through their poll stations by 1100. Others report slightly higher numbers, with one center estimating that 50 percent had voted by 1100.

¶6. Party witnesses continue to show up in large numbers. Some of the centers have been unable to accommodate all of the national and international observers, but none have reported any problems on account of the high numbers.

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